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Interview with Lois Mallory

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ORAL HISTORY OF LOIS NAOMI SADDLER MALLORY:

A ONE-ROOM SCHOOLTEACHER

Sue: We are Sue Long and Pat Ziegelmeier. This is February 25, 1991, and we are conducting an oral history interview of a one-room schoolteacher. Her name is Lois Mallory, and this interview is taking place at her home. Lois, could you tell us what your full name is?

Lois: Lois Saddler Mallory

Sue: And your age today or your birthday?

Lois: I am 79.

Sue: Please list the schools you attended.

Lois: I went to Bogue School until I was in the third grade; then we moved to Thomas County, and I went to Union School until the 7th grade. We then moved to Halford, and I finished the 8th grade at Halford. Then, I went to Hill City and stayed with my grandparents and went three years to high school. Then my brother got into high school, so we walked and met the bus and went to Gem my last year.

Sue: You moved back to Thomas County from Hill City to attend your last year of high school?

Lois: Yes.

Sue: Do you remember what year you graduated from high school?

Lois: May, 1929.

Sue: What year did you begin teaching?

Lois: That same fall of 1929.

Sue: Okay. How many consecutive years did you teach?

Lois: Forty-seven.

Sue: Forty-seven! How many of those years did you teach in the one-room school?

Lois: Two.

Sue: You taught beginning in 1929-30 and again 1930-31 in the one-room school. Could you tell us the names of the one-room schools that you taught in?

Lois: District 43 and District 69.

Sue: Okay. Do you remember where those schools were located?

Lois: Yes. One was north of Page in Thomas County and the other one was over here across the way--over here (pointing west from her home). I walked to teach there.

Sue: Okay. So they were both in Thomas County. How old were you when you began your teaching experience?

Lois: I think I was eighteen.

Sue: Were you married at the time you started teaching?

Lois: No.

Sue: No. Where did you live when you taught at the Page City school?

Lois: I lived with the Cliff Lewallen family.

Sue: How did you get to school? Did you walk?

Lois: I walked. They lived right across the corner.

Sue: What was your favorite subject, or did you have one?

Lois: I don't know that I had one.

Sue: Okay.

Pat: Could you tell us something about the subjects which were taught in the one-room schoolhouse?

Lois: I taught reading, arithmetic, spelling, geography, writing, and I had the primer and the first reader.

Sue: Is a primer like a reader too?

Lois: It is the one the children start in at the beginning. They can go through that and the first reader both in the same year.

Sue: Does the primer teach the ABC's, or do you learn that before you start into the reading book?

Lois: No, you start right in.

Sue: Did it have phonics in it, or did it just teach words by recognition?

Lois: We learned a lot of the words. In the back of the book, it had a lot of the words that you could learn before you

started. That is what we did.

Pat: What was the length of your school day?

Lois: From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Pat: How many months of the year did you have school?

Lois: Nine months.

Sue: What teaching methods did you use?

Lois: My own.

Sue: Your own. Did you use a lot of group activities--where you put the students together to work on activities?

Lois: No.

Sue: Was it more like individual study where each person worked at a subject?

Lois: Each person worked at their own level. While I was reciting with some, the rest of them were studying.

Pat: Did you have any teaching aids available, or did you have to make whatever you had?

Lois: We did not have very many. We had to make up most of them we had.

Sue: Which teaching supplies did you have in the school? Did you have a blackboard and chalk?

Lois: We had a blackboard and chalk, and that is what we used most of the time.

Sue: And, what did the children have? Did they have a slate?

Lois: No, they had tablets.

Sue: Tablets. Were those provided by the school, or did students each have to bring their own?

Lois: Each student brought their own?

Sue: And their own pencils, too?

Lois: Yes, and their own crayons.

Sue: What about textbooks? Were those at the school?

Lois: They had to buy their own textbooks.

Sue: Did they pass them down to brother and sister?

Lois: I suppose they did. That's what I would have done.

Pat: Did you have any special classes of anything? Like today we have the learning disabilities and special education classes? Was there anything at all related to that?

Lois: No.

Sue: What was the typical curriculum for a school day?

Lois: Usually we started out with the flag salute, and then I would read to the children. We had reading for the first grade, reading for the third, and reading for the fifth grade. At 10:30 we had recess, and we usually played outside when the weather was nice. But when the weather was bad, we would stay in. After recess, we would have arithmetic--first grade, third grade and fifth grade. At noon, we brought our own lunch. When it was nice outside, we would usually go outside and eat. When it was cold, we would stay inside to eat. After dinner, I

would read to the children for about fifteen minutes. We would then have a science lesson and geography for 5th grade and writing and then recess. After recess, we would have spelling. Usually the older children studied at the blackboard, and I would work with the first graders. Often on a Friday, we would have ciphering matches or maybe a spell-down or something like that.

Sue: Was 5th grade the only level that had the geography?

Lois: Yes.

Pat: Did you have any competency tests that you used to promote students from one grade to another?

Lois: No. We did not have anything like that.

Sue: You said that you had first grade, third grade, and fifth grade. Was that the way the children's ages stacked up, or was that just determined by their ability?

Lois: No, that was the way their ages stacked up.

Sue: Okay. What was the starting age for a child to come to school?

Lois: I think they could start when they were five. But, most of them started when they were six though.

Sue: Most of them six. In the one-room school did they usually go through the eighth grade or did they stop before then?

Lois: I don't know. I did not keep track of any of the kids.

Pat: Did your school have any type of library?

Lois: Very few books.

Pat: Were these brought by the families that were in the school?

Lois: No, they were some that were left there. I suppose from year-to-year they would supply a few extra books.

Sue: How were the textbooks decided upon?

Lois: The state decided the textbooks.

Sue: Okay, and who purchased the books?

Lois: They bought them. The parents of the children bought the textbooks; and they would get them at the drugstore, because the drugstore carried the school supplies.

Sue: And, where were the teacher's books provided from?

Lois: I guess I got my own.

Sue: Did you have to pay for your own?

Lois: I suppose I did.

Sue: That does not seem fair. What about the other school supplies? Were they provided by the county or the school board? Or, did you have to provide those yourself too--like the chalk?

Lois: I think the school board bought the chalk.

Sue: There were probably few other supplies?

Lois: We did not have hardly any supplies.

Pat: What would you say the atmosphere was of the educational

program? Was it a pretty strict sort of thing or relaxed? Or, how would you say it was compared to today?

Lois: I think it was strict, but it was warm too. I think I was strict with them.

Sue: Do you remember some of the rules which you had in your early schools which might be different from rules that you see in a school today?

Lois: I don't think we had any rules.

Sue: Like maybe attendance--did they have to come to school, or were they allowed to miss school when they were doing crops?

Lois: Well, children wanted to come to school because that was the only outlet they had, and they wanted to come to school.

Pat: Did you have some special programs in the school--like at Christmas time or other times of the year?

Lois: We had Christmas programs.

Sue: Did you have spelling bees?

Lois: No, not really.

Sue: Did you ever have music programs, or did you have a piano in the school?

Lois: We had an organ.

Sue: An organ! Was the school used for possibly church or something too?

Lois: No, it wasn't. The people went other places to church.

Pat: Did you have graduation exercises at the end of the year?

Lois: No, we did not have anyone to graduate.

Sue: Was this a public school?

Lois: It was a public school.

Sue: Okay. What type of heating and lighting and toilets were available at the schools?

Lois: We had a coal stove, and it was centered in about the middle of the room. I guess we had electricity. I don't remember lighting any lamps. We had outdoor toilets.

Sue: Who bought the coal for the school?

Lois: The school board bought the coal. When we needed coal, the school board would get it.

Sue: Were you responsible for lighting the stove each morning, or did the students come and help with that?

Lois: I did it before the children got there.

Pat: How did the school get its water?

Lois: We carried it from the closest neighbor.

Pat: In buckets?

Lois: Well, we had a big bucket that had a lid on it. That is the way we carried it.

Sue: Did the children have their own special cups, or did they all drink out of a dipper or something?

Lois: We all drank out of the same dipper. We did not think

anything about it then.

Sue: Could you tell us a little about the interior of the school?

Lois: It was very plain. The stove was in the center of the room. The blackboard was up in the front of the room, and then the teacher's desk, and then the recitation desk, and then the children's chairs or desks.

Sue: Did the children have a bench, or did they have separate desks?

Lois: No, they had separate desks.

Pat: Who was in charge of the upkeep of the building?

Lois: Well, I was. I was the janitor, but if I needed anything the school board would come and help me if I needed anything.

Sue: Your school, was it built out of wood?

Lois: Yes.

Sue: Both of them were built out of wood?

Lois: That's right.

Sue: Was there more than one door?

Lois: We just had one door that faced the back of the school, and the windows were on the east and west side--all windows on the east and west.

Sue: Were did the children place their coats and their lunch boxes?

Lois: We had a little hall where you came in from the outer door, and we had an inner door where they could come into the classroom.

Sue: So, that helped keep it warmer probably?

Lois: Yes, it did.

Sue: And, were both schools that way?

Lois: Yes. They were built just identical.

Sue: That's unusual.

Pat: Did you have any special events happen at the school?

Lois: I don't think we did. I can't think of any.

Sue: Did they use the school for other social activities in the community?

Lois: Not the year I taught there.

Sue: I know a lot of the country schools were used for church and all social functions.

Lois: They didn't the year I was there. I think the people went other places.

Pat: Maybe into town?

Lois: Yes. I think that's what they did.

Pat: Could you tell us about a typical day before and after school?

Lois: Well, before school if the children got there early enough, they would play outside. But when it was cold, they would come right on into the schoolhouse.

Pat: Did they go right home after school, or did they stay and play awhile?

Lois: No, they went home. As quick as school was over, they went home.

Sue: How did they get to school?

Lois: Most of them walked. If it was bad, they would bring them.

Sue: Did they have cars, or was it horse and buggy or both?

Lois: I think they had cars as I can remember. But, I cannot remember the Bell family. I think they had a car. I think they brought them when it was bad.

Sue: How did you call school to order?

Lois: I rang a big bell.

Sue: And, is that how you called them in after recess too?

Lois: Yes, and I got that bell. When I retired, Mr. Nickel said, "Is there something that you would like to have?" And, I said, "Yes, I have a big bell in the closet in there that I would like to have." He says, "Take it, it's yours."

Sue: Oh, that's neat.

Pat: That was a nice way to remember. Could you tell us any ways that teaching habits are different now than when you taught?

Lois: I think they are more lenient the way they teach now,

and they bring a lot of other stuff in. I mean a lot of other subjects in.

Pat: Where you stayed with the basics pretty much.

Sue: Did you assign homework to your children back then?

Lois: No, I don't think children should have to do work at home if they study at school. I think that their dads don't take their work home at night, and I don't think they have to take their work home.

Pat: How did you test them?

Lois: Oh, I gave them little tests--tests I made up.

Sue: Little written tests or were they oral tests or both kinds?

Lois: Both kinds.

Pat: That you made up.

Lois: Yeah.

Pat: What about the ways teachers were expected to conduct themselves in the community? Were there any standards by which you were expected to live?

Lois: Never do or go any place that the district didn't approve of.

Pat: And, did they give you pretty strict guidelines on what was expected?

Lois: No, they did not exactly say that. But, you knew what was expected of you.

Sue: Did they have a dress code for teachers too?

Lois: No.

Sue: Did you have grade cards?

Lois: Yes, we did.

Sue: Do you know how often they went out?

Lois: I think the first. I think I sent them out every month.
I think that is what we did.

Sue: Did their parents have to sign them and return them?

Lois: Their parents signed them and returned them, and at the end of the year they got to keep their report cards.

Pat: Were you in charge of any extra curricular activities?

Lois: No. I can't think of any.

Sue: Did you have activities where you competed with other schools or did things with other schools?

Lois: No, we didn't. We did not think we had enough children to compete, so we didn't.

Sue: Was your population of children more boys or more girls or about evenly divided?

Lois: Two boys and three girls was what I had.

Sue: Was this at the Page City School?

Lois: Yes.

Sue: How many did you have at your other school?

Lois: Two little girls was all that I had.

Sue: Just two.

Pat: That was a small school. Was there a principal for the school?

Lois: No, but we did have a county superintendent that came around and would evaluate us.

Pat: And, did she come and visit the classroom to do that?

Lois: Yes. And, she stayed, and stayed, and stayed, and the children just got kind of upset. She wanted to see what the children were doing and how they were doing.

Sue: Did they act the same when she was there as when she wasn't?

Lois: No, and they walked in on us unexpectedly. We did not know when they were coming.

Sue: Surprise visits!

Lois: Always.

Pat: How did you handle discipline problems with the children?

Lois: I don't think I had any.

Pat: They knew they needed to behave and do their work.

Lois: When I taught in the rural school, I don't think I had any discipline problems. I don't remember any.

Sue: Where did you live while teaching?

Lois: I lived with the Cliff Lewallen family.

Sue: Then you walked across the road to school?

Lois: Yes, across the corner.

Pat: How much schooling did you have in order to teach?

Lois: I did not have any except I graduated from high school. Then, I wrote on the county exam, and I got a second grade county certificate. That's what I started teaching with. That fall, I went to Hays--the next fall or the next summer--and started working on my degree. And then, I wrote on the county exam and got a first grade county certificate. Then I went on to school, and I got a three-year state certificate. And then, I went on to school and got a 60-hour life from Hays. I stayed at Hays until I got my 60-hour life. Then, I went to school at Lincoln, Nebraska, and stayed with my grandparents and went to school two summers. I decided there was surely a better place to go to school than that, so I transferred to Greeley, Colorado, because it is so hot in Lincoln. I loved the school. Then, I went to Greeley until I got my degree.

Sue: And, what year did you get your bachelors degree?

Lois: 1956.

Sue: At that time, you were teaching where? Do you remember where? In one of the consolidated schools?

Lois: Oh, I was teaching in Colby at that time. But, I taught in Gem eight years. Then, I went to Brewster and taught one year, and then I was in Colby 36 years.

Sue: At the Colby Public School.

Pat: What grade did you teach?

Lois: Third grade.

Pat: Was it all third grade all of those years?

Lois: Third grade all of those years.

Sue: So, always elementary.

Lois: But when I was in Gem, I taught third and fourth grade.

Sue: A combined classroom. In the country school, you said the school year was nine months. When did the year start? Did it start after Labor Day, or did it start in August?

Lois: Usually after Labor Day.

Sue: And, then it ended sometime in May?

Lois: Yes, in May. But, I don't know exactly the date.

Sue: Usually before Memorial Day.

Lois: Well, when we got our nine months in--when the school board said we had our nine months.

Pat: Did you ever call school off for bad weather or that sort of thing, or did the children live close enough to come?

Lois: No, I don't think so.

Sue: Did you have special vacations--like now we have Spring Break or Christmas?

Lois: We had Christmas.

Sue: Like a week or a day or?

Lois: I think about a week. When I was teaching in District

69, they told me I had to either teach Thanksgiving Day or make it up. I said, "I'll teach it," because we were not going to have our dinner until evening anyway. So, I taught Thanksgiving Day. My sister went with me.

Pat: When you think about the school building you were teaching in, do you know why the school was built?

Lois: No, I suppose to take care of the children in that district.

Sue: How was it determined who went to school in the buildings that you had?

Lois: Well, they were divided into districts.

Sue: Do you know how big a district was? Was it by county boundaries or by townships?

Lois: Probably townships, I would say. I am not sure. I would say.

Pat: Was there a school board for your school?

Lois: Oh, yes.

Sue: Do you remember how many members?

Lois: Always three.

Sue: Always three. Do you remember if they were elected, or were they appointed?

Lois: I just don't remember how they were chosen.

Pat: Did you have anything similar to a PTA organization at that time?

Lois: No.

Sue: Who hired and fired the teachers?

Lois: The school board did.

Sue: Did the county superintendent have any input as to the personnel that was hired?

Lois: I don't think she did.

Pat: Did anyone else in the community have any input?

Lois: Well, I suppose if they had a gripe they did have input. But, I didn't have any problem with them.

Sue: When you were issued a contract, was it at a specific time of the year? Or, could they just issue the contract when they chose to do so?

Lois: I got my contract that summer. Most of the time when you get a contract it comes in March, usually.

Sue: How were you paid? At the end of the month or at the beginning of the month?

Lois: At the end of the month.

Sue: So, you probably started in September and received your first check at the end of September.

Lois: That's right.

Sue: Was it split up on a nine month basis, or did you have the option of teachers now where you are paid on a twelve month basis?

Lois: No. We were paid every month.

Sue: All twelve months of the year.

Lois: No, no. Just the nine months I worked.

Pat: Why did the country schools you worked at close?

Lois: I suppose they consolidated with other schools or too few pupils.

Sue: Did children move in and out of the district during the school year, or was that an unusual occurrence?

Lois: No, not usually. But, I did have one move in.

Pat: Do you know what the greatest distance any student traveled to school might have been?

Lois: I think about two miles, and they walked most of the time.

Pat: How many students did you have in your schools?

Lois: Five.

Sue: Five in the one school and?

Lois: Two in the other one.

Sue: What grade levels were the children in in the school where you only had two students? Were they both in the same grade?

Lois: No, no. You know, I cannot even remember.

Sue: After the students graduated from school, do you have any idea what occupations they assumed?

Lois: The only one I kept track of was Juanita Lewallen, and she got married. I think Armin Jones was the other

one; and I think he was a bricklayer.

Sue: Was it unusual for the students to go on to college?

Lois: Not usually. They did not go on to college.

Pat: What was about the average number of years the student spent in school?

Lois: Well, they usually went eight years, but they went on to high school.

Pat: Were they required to go a certain number of years?

Lois: I don't think so. Now, I think they may have to go eight years. Don't they?

Sue: They make them go until age 16, or you are truant if you are not in school.

Lois: So, that would be about eight years.

Sue: No, that would be about sophomore in high school.

Lois: Oh.

Sue: Was there a particular type of dress, or what was the appearance of the students like?

Lois: Well, the boys wore overalls or pants, and they always looked nice when they came to school. The girls wore little dresses. They did not wear jeans; they wore little dresses.

Sue: And in the winter time, did the girls still wear dresses?

Lois: Well, it seemed like they did.

Sue: Did they have long coats and boots?

Lois: Yes, they had long coats and boots.

Sue: But, they were walking to school!

Lois: They had long stockings, too.

Pat: Did it cost the students anything to enroll in school?

Lois: No, it did not cost them anything. If they lived in the district, they just came to school.

Pat: What was your salary when you first started teaching?

Lois: \$85 per month.

Sue: Was it \$85 at both of the one-room schools?

Lois: I think I got \$85 both years.

Sue: How did you receive your paycheck?

Lois: Well, they brought it to me the first year I taught. Then, the next year I had to go around and have each member sign it--sign the paycheck.

Sue: Did one of them write the paycheck and give it to you?

Lois: Yes, one of them wrote the--usually the clerk would write it, and then I'd have to take it to the other ones to get it signed.

Pat: And, how did they determine what your salary was going to be?

Lois: I don't know. I guess they just usually paid what was the going salary at that time for country schools.

Sue: Do you know how the money was raised to pay your salary?

Lois: I really don't know. I guess it was by taxes.

Pat: Did you have anything at all to say about the salary?

Lois: No, I didn't. They just told me what they would give me, and I could accept it or not. And, I said I would take it.

Sue: Was there an enrollment fee charged the students to come to school?

Lois: No.

Sue: So it would be like the public school today where there is free enrollment.

Lois: Yes. But the kids today, their books are furnished.

Sue: Some schools charge a textbook rental fee.

Lois: Yes, that is what they do.

Sue: And, they did not charge anything like that at that time?

Lois: No.

Sue: How about lunch? What did the children do at lunch time?

Lois: Well, at the rural school we brought our lunch.

Sue: And, what was the normal thing that you might find in a student's lunch box?

Lois: Oh, a sandwich, some fruit, and maybe a piece of cake or a cookie.

Sue: What did they drink? Did they bring anything to drink?

Lois: We drank water--water out of the one dipper.

Sue: What type of sandwich? Maybe bread and jelly or meat?

Lois: I don't remember what they brought.

- Sue: Were there specific school records kept--like a transcript of the student's records?
- Lois: Yes, I had a record book. And then, I had to send the attendance record in each month.
- Pat: To the county?
- Lois: To the county superintendent. But, we had a register that we kept in the school to tell their grades and everything.
- Sue: Did you use flash cards in the classroom ever?
- Lois: Not when I was in the country school. If I did, I made them up. The children in those days wanted to come to school, and they wanted to learn.
- Pat: So, you would say overall they were very eager then?
- Lois: Yes, they were. They wanted to come to school and learn.
- Sue: Were students ever required to repeat a grade?
- Lois: Well, I did not repeat any of those I had in the county schools. But, I did at town schools.
- Sue: Was it sometimes difficult to get all of the classes in in one day, or was it a very rigid schedule which you followed?
- Lois: We just followed our schedule.
- Sue: When you were working with one group of students, what did the other students do?
- Lois: They were studying. Getting ready to recite.

- Sue: Did you ever use peer tutoring where they worked with each other?
- Lois: No, I worked with them.
- Sue: What kind of outside equipment did you have at the school?
- Lois: We didn't. Well, we had a ball and a bat and, I think, we had a basketball, and we had some goals out there.
- Sue: Were there any swings?
- Lois: I think there were some swings at the one school--the first school I taught at. I think we had some swings there.
- Sue: Did you have encyclopedias at the school? Or were encyclopedias not available?
- Lois: I don't think we did.
- Sue: What was the oldest student that you had?
- Lois: I think he was about eleven.
- Sue: So, probably about fifth grade?
- Lois: About fifth grade.
- Pat: And, the youngest was five or six?
- Lois: Five or six, and I don't remember how old she was when she started. Because I did not have very many, and I figured that I'd take her anyway.
- Pat: Yes. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about comparing teaching in those days to in your later

years?

Lois: Well, yes. We followed a strict schedule in the earlier days. In the later days, we had a lot of other activities going on.

Pat: Did you think it was easier to help the students more with just staying with the strict schedule then?

Lois: No, I don't think so. I think we got along just as well because we had other activities going on--especially when I was in the Colby school. We put on a lot of programs and had parents come in. We did a lot of things like that.

Sue: Did the depression of the 1930's affect the school?

Lois: My salary went down to \$60 a month when I was teaching in Gem. It went down from \$85 to \$70 and then to \$60 a month.

Sue: In the same contract year?

Lois: No, in different years. I taught there eight years.

Sue: Did it affect the number of students that attended the school? Did some of the children not get to come to school?

Lois: No, they all came. But during the dirt storms, it was pretty hard for them to get there.

Sue: Was school every canceled because of the dirt storms or a blizzard?

Lois: When I taught in the town schools, they did.

Sue: But, never in the one-room school?

Lois: I don't ever remember canceling school.

Sue: Was it every real hot? Like now, sometimes they cancel school because the temperatures are so hot.

Lois: No, we did not cancel school because it was hot.

Pat: But, you didn't start until after Labor Day?

Lois: Yeah, usually after Labor Day.

Sue: Pat, do you have any other questions?

Pat: I don't think of any others. Unless there is anything you think of you would like to share with us?

Lois: I can't think of anything unless you ask me some other questions.

Sue: What things do you have to show us to put in the appendix? This is your county certificate from July 6, 1931. Did you have to take a specific type of test?

Lois: Oh, we took tests on spelling, reading, writing, English, grammar and composition, geography, arithmetic, United States history, Kansas history, civil government, psychology, physiology and hygiene, elements of agriculture, elements of general science, English classics, principles and methods of teaching, and music. We took those tests, and it took us two days to take those tests.

Sue: And, they were comprehensive written tests?

Lois: Yes. They really were.

Sue: So, you studied lots?

Lois: I did not study for them. I just went up and took them.

Sue: Was there a fee to take a test at that time?

Lois: You had to pay so much to get your certificate.

Sue: But, not to test.

Lois: I don't think they charged anything for the test. The county superintendent gave the tests.

Sue: And, were they only given at specific times of the year?

Lois: Yes. I think it was in May. I am not sure when they gave it. They just gave them anytime.

Sue: (Looking at documents) This is also a statement of grades.

Pat: County board examination.

Sue: Was there a minimum average score that you had to maintain to be certified to teach?

Lois: I don't think so. I suppose if you flunked all of your classes, you would.

Sue: State of Kansas Department of Public Instruction three-year degree in 1956 and 1959.

Pat: That was after you had gotten your other degree, wasn't it?

Lois: No, no. Oh wait, yeah. I had to get a teacher's

certificate in Kansas. See, I brought my grades back from Colorado.

Sue: Certificate of First Grade from August 1931. You renewed these every three years. Is that correct?

Lois: No. Now you have to get eight hours every five years. (Looking at certificate)--renewed in Thomas County. Well, I guess I did have to get renewed.

Sue: Was the process the same? Did you have to go back and take the test over, or could you just apply for a certificate?

Lois: I just applied for it.

Sue: Was there some specific requirement you had to meet like more college hours or a certain number of years teaching?

Lois: I was going to college all the time. I went every summer for a long time. This is my three-year state.

Sue: August 21, 1939, from Fort Hays State.

Lois: I cannot find my other ones.

Sue: This is a transcript of grades from Nebraska.

Pat: This one is from Colorado.

Lois: I had taken three two-hour courses, and that about took the hide off of me.

Pat: It kept you really busy, didn't it?

Lois: In five or six weeks. Oh, boy! I said, "I can forget A's," so I worked for B's. Everyone just piled the work

on.

Sue: Report of Supervision.

Lois: Oh, yeah. That's when Mr. Rogers evaluated me.

Pat: That was after you were in the Colby schools then.

Sue: Is this the same kind of report that your county superintendent would have given you?

Lois: No, she never gave me anything.

Sue: They did not give you a written evaluation?

Lois: No.

Sue: Did you ever get any feedback from her after she visited your classroom?

Lois: No. She might say when she left, "Well, you're doing a good job." That's all she'd say.

Pat: Was this out of a school newsletter?

Lois: Bea Davis wrote that. That was from a school newsletter.

Sue: This is from Brewster Consolidated Schools notifying you that there is a job open.

Lois: Yes. I showed you this.

Sue: That is your diploma from Colorado State for your bachelors degree.

Lois: It is called the University of Northern Colorado now.

Pat: I am sure you felt very proud to get that after all those years of work. Didn't you?

Lois: I really hugged this when I got a hold of it. You never

knew whether you were going to graduate until your name appeared upon the board. They had a bulletin board that you had to go to. These are some of my contracts.

Pat: Oh, in your different jobs?

Lois: Yes, I could not find all of them. This is the last one.

Sue: How did your contracts change from the initial contract you received at the one-room school to maybe contracts you received in later years?

Lois: I don't remember if I got a contract when I started teaching.

Sue: Was it more an oral contract maybe?

Lois: I think it was. I don't remember getting a contract the first two schools I had. If I did, I didn't keep them. Surely, I would have.

Pat: These are interesting to keep.

Lois: I don't have all of them though.

Sue: 1933.

Lois: I had one for 1932, but I don't know where it is.

Sue: Were contracts issued on just a one-year basis?

Lois: Yes.

Sue: So, always one year.

Lois: Yes, always one year. I got a contract every year. Is that thing still going?

Pat: Yes. We might make copies of some of those things to put

in our appendix later.

Sue: If it would be okay with you?

Lois: Yes. Do you want these of Gem?

Sue: Sure! Because, it would be important to compare the variations in contracts--how they have changed.

Lois: Oh, I just got \$80 when I went there (Brewster).

Sue: That was in 1939.

Lois: I think I was getting \$60 at Gem.

Pat: That was during the depression.

Sue: Which did you like teaching the best in--the one-room school or the consolidated school where you had more students and just one classroom?

Lois: I enjoyed the consolidated school because I had more children to work with, and I liked to do things. We had programs and things.

Pat: Was it easier to work with children when they were the same ages rather than the different ages you had in the one-room school?

Lois: Oh, I don't think it was any easier. It was just different. I enjoyed teaching in the rural school.

Sue: You said you never required your students to take homework home. How about the teacher?

Lois: Oh, I brought homework all the time. Well, not when I was in the rural school, because I had time to grade my

papers there. But when I was in the consolidated school, I had to bring papers home every day.

Sue: In the one-room school, you did not always have homework. When did you do your preparation? Maybe before school when the stove was heating up?

Lois: At night before I went home. I always got ready for the next day before I went home from school. Always!

Sue: So, the children were there from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. What was your school day like?

Lois: Oh, I usually went over there at 8:00 a.m. to start the fire.

Pat: How late were you there in the evening?

Lois: Oh, maybe until 5:00 or 5:30 p.m. I always got ready for the next day before I went home. I did that every place I was.

Sue: Did the fire burn out, or did you have to put it out?

Lois: I sort of banked it. I don't know whether I could do it again or not. But, I banked the fire so that it was easy to start the next morning.

Sue: Did the water freeze in the bucket?

Lois: Oh, we always took the bucket home and took it back the next day.

Sue: When the children needed to go out to the outhouse, did they have to ask special permission or was it only at

recess time?

Lois: Oh, if they had to go during school time they would ask permission to go.

Sue: I know children now have their little hand signals that they use. Did they have hand signals?

Lois: No, they just asked if they could go out to the bathroom.

Sue: Did parents ever come to school to visit?

Lois: Yes, they did. I enjoyed having them come, too.

Sue: Did you have birthday parties? Did the children celebrate their birthdays at school?

Lois: I don't remember whether we did when I was in the rural school or not. If we did, they usually brought little cakes or cookies. The parents would come then and bring something to pass out to the rest of them.

Sue: Did you celebrate the other holidays at school--like make decorations? I know that art was not one of your curriculum activities.

Lois: We had art.

Sue: You did have art.

Lois: Oh, yes.

Pat: So, you had to do everything then--music and art and all of the other things.

Lois: Oh, yes. Everything. But, we did not have much music when I was in the rural schools.

Sue: So did the children make...

Lois: We'd sing. We'd always sing, and we always made things at Christmas time and Thanksgiving time.

Sue: For parents, or just to decorate the school?

Lois: Oh, we'd decorate the school; and we'd make a Christmas card or Thanksgiving card for the parents.

Sue: Did you ever have a Christmas tree?

Lois: Yes, we did.

Sue: What kind was it? A traditional fir tree or what was it?

Lois: It was an evergreen that we had.

Sue: What kind of decorations did you make for it?

Lois: We made them.

Sue: Out of paper or popcorn?

Lois: Mostly paper and, I guess, we probably used popcorn too. But, we made chains and decorated it.

Sue: Did you ever have a problem with animals in the school? Like mice? Snakes?

Lois: No. Never. If I had any mice around, I got a trap and got them caught. No, we didn't have any snakes. Well, there were snakes out in the yard.

Sue: I wondered if that was a concern when the children were out playing? If there were possibly rattlesnakes?

Lois: I don't think there was any problem with the snakes.

Sue: Are there any questions that we did not ask, or anything

that you would like to tell us that you can think of to add to your report?

Lois: Well, what do you want me to tell you?

Sue: Any amusing incidents that you can think of that happened at school, maybe?

Lois: Well, it has been a long time since I taught in the rural school. I don't remember. I don't think I can remember any incidents.

Pat: You have given us a great deal of useful information here.

Sue: It has been fun visiting with you. I've learned a lot about how the one-room school is different from education today.

Lois: Oh, yes. It is far different. We did not have very much to work with in the rural schools. Because, I don't know why. I guess just because people did not expect the district to buy it. We did not have very many things to work with; and, the things that I worked with, I usually bought myself.

Sue: Out of your salary.

Lois: Yes, out of my salary.

Sue: We really appreciate your spending tonight with us answering our questions.

Lois: Well, it has been kind of nice to live it all over again.

Pat: Well, we appreciate your looking up all these documents, too.

Sue: When we get our report all put together, we will bring you a copy.

Lois: Okay. I would appreciate that.

Sue: Thank you for your time.

Lois: Can we turn that thing off now?

Sue: Yes.